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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3832

INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

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RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/OSD WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/Joint STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RHMFIUU/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY

UNCLAS KABUL 001147

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/FO, SCA/A,

STATE PASS TO USAID FOR AID/ANE, AID/DCHA/DG

NSC FOR WOOD

OSD FOR SHIVERS

CENTCOM FOR CG CJTF-101 POLAD

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: ASSEMBLY WALKOUT CONTINUES; STILL NO ELECTION LAW

REF: KABUL 1008

¶11. (SBU) The boycott by a group of predominantly non-Pashtun MPs of the National Assembly's lower house plenary sessions continues to prevent consideration of the election law bill. The lower house will adjourn for its summer recess June 4. The assembly's failure to make quorum prior to the recess would delay election law passage for at least a month and a half.

¶12. (SBU) Lower house leaders and several influential MPs have repeatedly, but unsuccessfully, attempted to broker a resolution to the Kochi seat-reservation dispute that precipitated the boycott and loss of quorum (REFTEL). Wahabi former warlord Ustad Abdul Rasul Sayyaf (Pashtun, Kabul) rebuffed Speaker Qanooni's (Tajik, Kabul) May 6 invitation to a meeting of the disputants. From the other end of the ethnic spectrum, lower house First Deputy Speaker Mir Wais Yasini's (Pashtun, Nangarhar) strenuous behind-the-scenes efforts failed to muster enough MPs to make quorum May 10; however, he did erode the boycott. Encouragingly, MP Qadria Yazdan Parast (Tajik, Kabul), along with nine others from the original group of boycotters, returned to the chamber.

¶13. (SBU) Pashtun MPs remain determined to preserve the 10-seat Kochi reservation, which contributes to their ethnic bloc's voting power. MP Shakar Kargar (Uzbek, Faryab) said Pashtun MPs rejected several compromise offers from the boycotters. MPs Fatima Nazari (Hazara, Kabul) and Daud Sultanzyoy (Pashtun, Ghazni) separately said non-Pashtun boycotters are equally determined to shift the chamber's ethnic balance more in their favor.

¶14. (SBU) We have increased the frequency of our meetings with all lower house faction leaders. We are quietly registering with them our interest both in the elections law's passage and in the National Assembly's execution of its constitutional responsibilities on behalf of the Afghan people.

WOOD